YOUR DAUGHTER, WHO WAS RAISED IN KROHG VILLAGE.
I AM TALKING ABOUT ANGELINA ...
LUCILLE.
...WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ALMENDRA?
1
AND SO ...
SHE WAS THE ONLY CHILD IN KROHG TO SURVIVE ...
IN-FLICTED UPON HER BY THE AUTO-MATA ...
JUST LIKE US, SHE HAD ZONAPHA SYN-DROME ...

Act 12
Women's Blood

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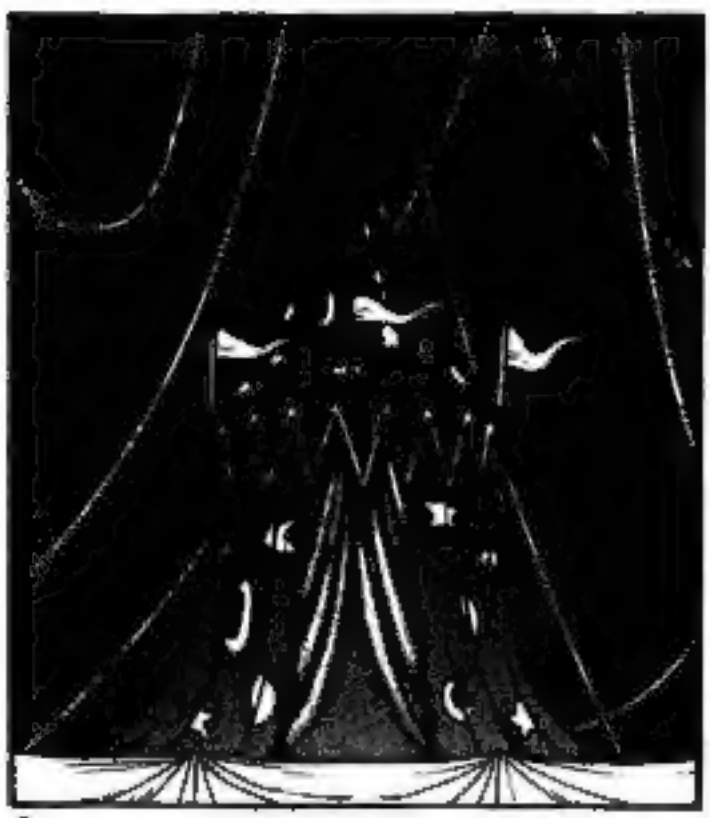
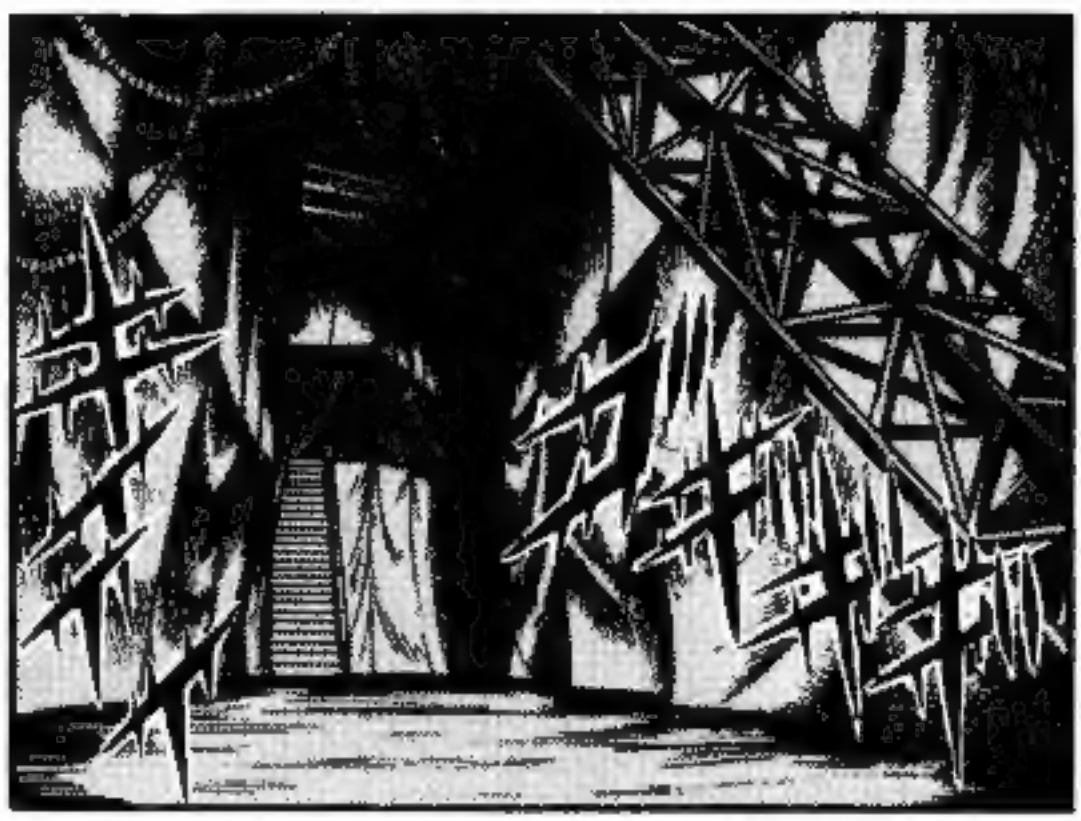




REMEM-
BER, I
ALSO
...
BECAME A
SHIROGANE
BACK THEN,
ALONG
WITH YOU
...
COME, NOW,
WON'T YOU
REMINISCE
WITH ME,
LUCILLE?
...AND
WHAT
OF IT?

WE FOUGHT ...

FILLED WITH THE DESIRE FOR REVENGE AGAINST THE DOLLS WHO KILLED OUR FAMILIES AND SPREAD THAT INCURABLE DISEASE.

AND WHEN WE DID SO, WE NEARLY ALWAYS AMBUSHED THE DOLLS ...

WE HAD A CERTAIN SOMETHING THAT THE DOLLS CAME AFTER, OVER AND OVER.

A CERTAIN SOMETHING ...

YOU MEAN THE SOFT STONE.

3

YES, THE STONE THAT PRODUCES AQUA VITAE, THE ALL-HEALING ELIXIR THAT SAVED US FROM ZONAPHA SYNDROME ...

ONLY ONE SOFT STONE EXISTS IN THIS WORLD ...

AQUA VITAE WAS USED ON THE DOLLS' MISTRESS, THE DOLL FRANCINE.

THEY WOULD UNDER-STAND HER HEART, AND BE ABLE TO MAKE HER LAUGH.

AND BECOME THE SAME AS THEIR LADY FRANCINE ...

MAKING THE DOLL FRANCINE LAUGH IS THEIR REASON FOR EXISTING. THEY BELIEVED THAT IF THEY WERE TO DRINK AQUA VITAE AS WELL...

AN-GE-LINA ...

NO... TO BE PRECISE ...

AND SO THE DOLLS WOULD DESCEND UPON US...

TAR-GETING THE SOFT STONE.

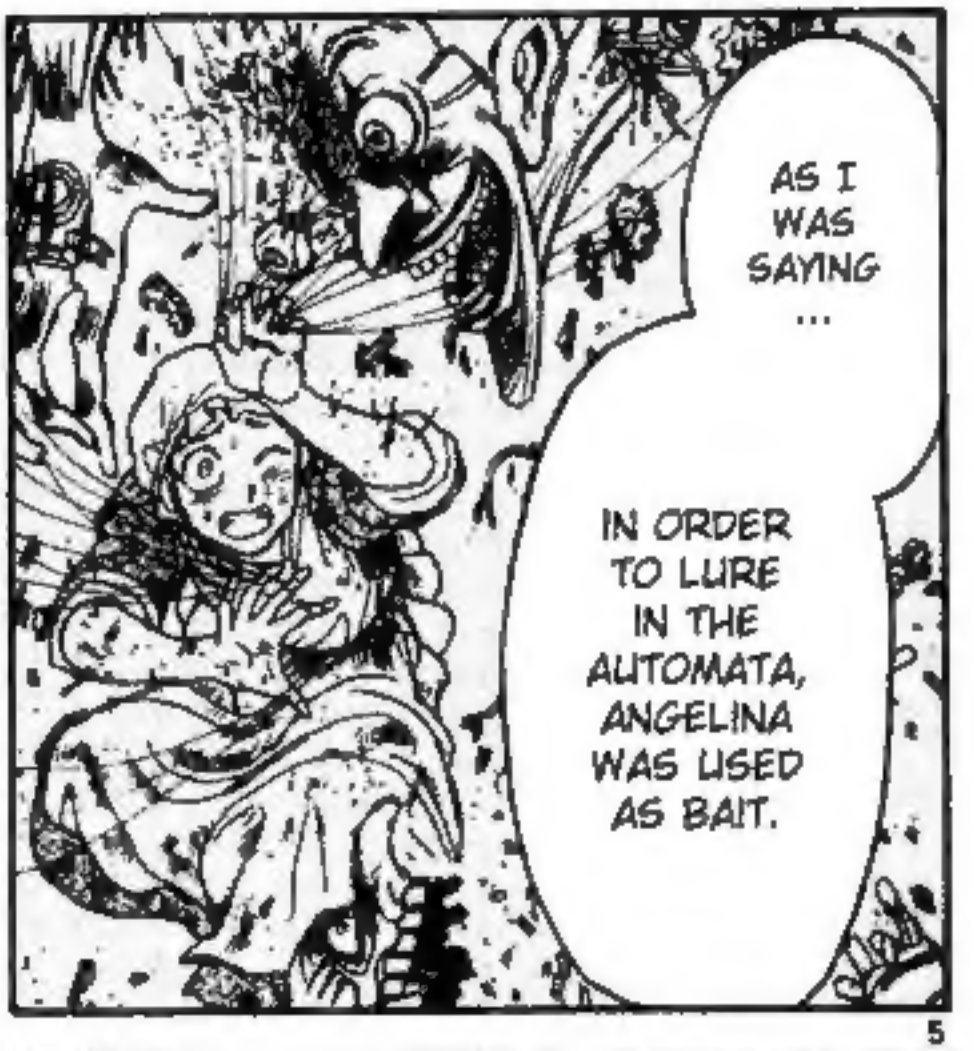
WAS WHAT THEY WERE AFTER.

THE SOFT STONE'S CON-TAINER ...

AND AN ADULT'S BODY WOULD HAVE REJECTED IT...
THE SOFT STONE COULD ONLY BE STORED IN A HUMAN BODY.

EM-BEDDING THE SOFT STONE IN YOUNG ANGELINA'S BODY.
IT WAS A TRULY CRUEL THING ...

AND YET, WASN'T WHAT WE DID... AN UNPARDONABLE THING? ...IT WAS THE ACT OF DEMONS.
IT WAS ALL FOR THE SAKE OF PROTECTING HUMANITY FROM THE DOLLS... ONE MIGHT JUSTIFY IT THAT WAY.


AS I WAS SAYING ...
IN ORDER TO LURE IN THE AUTOMATA, ANGELINA WAS USED AS BAIT.

SHE HERSELF UNDER-STOOD WHAT HAD TO BE DONE ...

YOU, HER MOTHER, IN PARTICULAR... WHEN WE DIE, I DOUBT WE WILL PASS THROUGH THE GATES OF HEAVEN.

...OF ANGELINA'S CURSED FATE.
HMPH... HOWEVER, THAT WAS NOT THE END...

14 YEARS AFTER THE FIGHTING BEGAN BETWEEN SHIROGANE AND ALTOMATA ...

PROTECT THE CON-TAINER!
MONTFALCON UNIT, CASTOR UNIT! ATTACK THE ENEMY FROM THE FRONT!

OVER HERE, AUTO-MATA!

YES... ANGELINA HAD BEGUN TO RESEMBLE THE DOLL FRANCINE...

THE SOFT STONE IS RIGHT HERE!

SHE WAS LIKE TWO PEAS IN A POD WITH, OF ALL PEOPLE, THE LEADER OF THE AUTOMATA WE SO DETESTED ...

IT WAS NO MERE RESEM-BLANCE.

ANGELINA, GROWN INTO A BEAUTIFUL 17 YEAR OLD GIRL, HAD BEEN GIVEN STILL MORE CRUEL HARDSHIP BY THE FATES.

THAT STUPID GIRL...

THERE WAS NO NEED TO WORRY OVER IT.

HMPH. IT WAS JUST SOME KIND OF CO-INCI-DENCE.

DON'T YOU THINK LUCILLE MUST BE HIDING SOMETHING FROM US?

IS THERE SOMETHING GOING ON?

LOOK LIKE THAT DOLL?

WHY DOES LUCILLE'S DAUGHTER ...

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

LUCILLE ...

LUCILLE ...

HMPH. WHO ASKED HER TO TROUBLE HERSELF OVER THAT?

ANGELINA WAS GREATLY WORRIED THAT EVERYONE WOULD LOSE THEIR TRUST IN YOU IF IT CONTINUED.

BUT, YOU KNOW, LUCILLE, BACK THEN... CONFUSION AND SUSPICION WERE SWIRLING AMONGST THE SHIROGANE.

HOHOHO ... "STUPID GIRL," YOU SAY?

HER DEPARTURE WAS A MATTER OF HER OWN WILLFULNESS.

AND SHE TOOK IT UPON HERSELF TO FEEL THAT SHE HAD TO LEAVE...

SHE TOOK IT UPON HERSELF TO WORRY OVER IT...

ANGELINA LEFT BY HERSELF FOR PARTS UNKNOWN.

TOGETHER WITH THE WINDS OF SPRING ...

YES, THAT'S RIGHT. IN 1840... TWENTY YEARS AFTER THE DAY THE PEOPLE OF KROHG BECAME SHIROGANE ...

ALMENDRA, YOU DIDN'T MENTION MY DAUGHTER WITHOUT SOME SORT OF REASON ...

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO TELL ME?

HOW MUCH TROUBLE HAVE WE BEEN PUT THROUGH SINCE THEN, TRYING TO KEEP THE DOLLS FROM LEARNING THAT THE SOFT STONE IS LOST...? HONESTLY...

INCLUDING THE STORY OF THEIR GODDESS, THE DOLL FRANCINE.

WITH MY EYES CLOSED, I HEAR MANY THINGS WHISPERED BETWEEN THE DOLLS.

HERE IN THE MIDNIGHT CIRCUS, I PLAY THE PART OF THE BLIND FORTUNE-TELLER.

TO MARK THE OCCASION, I WILL GIVE YOU THE ANSWER TO A SHORT QUESTION.

I DOUBT WE WILL MEET AGAIN.

OLD FRIEND... WE HAVE NOT MET FOR MANY YEARS.

LUCILLE ...

WHY... WAS YOUR DAUGHTER'S FACE EXACTLY LIKE THAT OF THE DOLL FRANCINE?

A QUES-TION?

HAD AN AUNT BY THE NAME OF FRANCINE.

ANS-WER ...

BECAUSE YOU, LUCILLE ...

MANY PEOPLE WERE FORCED TO SELL THEIR CHILDREN TO SLAVERS.

IN THE YEAR OF YOUR MOTHER'S BIRTH, THERE WAS A BAD HARVEST. IN ORDER TO FEED THEIR FAMILIES...

IT HAPPENED LONG BEFORE YOU WERE BORN.

I... HAD AN AUNT? THEN...

WHILE HER OLDER SISTER, FRANCINE, WAS SOLD ...

IN YOUR HOUSE, YOUR MOTHER, STILL AN UNWEANED INFANT, WAS LEFT BEHIND ...

THE MAN IN BLACK ROBES WHO DESTROYED OUR VILLAGE.

AND THERE SHE MET THE CREATOR OF THE DOLLS...

SHE WAS SOLD TO THE FAR-AWAY CITY OF PRAGUE ...

BUT WHAT THEY ARE CERTAIN OF IS THE FACT THAT ...

IT IS UNCLEAR EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT ...

FROM THE BITS AND PIECES OF THE DOLLS' SPEECH ...

TO THE EXTENT THAT HE BUILT THE AUTOMATON USING HER AS A MODEL ...

BETWEEN YOUR AUNT AND THE MAN IN BLACK ROBES.

THERE WAS SOME KIND OF VERY DEEP RELATION-SHIP...

BUT, LUCILLE, THE BLOOD OF THE HUMAN FRANCINE FLOWS IN YOUR VEINS.

I CANNOT SAY. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT THE FACTS WERE ON THAT SIDE OF THINGS.

IT HAD BEEN THE MODEL'S HOME-TOWN... IS THAT IT?

SO HE BROUGHT THE DOLL FRANCINE TO KROHG AND DESTROYED IT BECAUSE ...

NO ONE COULD DENY THE RESEMBLANCE.

BUT AS TIME PASSED, HER FORM SEEMS TO HAVE LIVED ON IN YOUR DAUGHTER, ANGELINA.

YOU YOURSELF MAY NOT HAVE LOOKED LIKE FRANCINE.

THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION.

THAT IS...

TO THE OTHER VILLAGERS WHEN I SEE THEM IN HELL. "I GAVE THAT COLD-BLOODED LUCILLE 'QUITE A SURPRISE!'"

FUFU... I'LL HAVE SOMETHING TO BOAST ABOUT ...

THIS IS QUITE A SURPRISE ...

.....

YOU NEVER MET HER AGAIN, DID YOU?

28 YEARS AFTER ANGELINA VANISHED, SHE CONTACTED YOU AGAIN AFTER BEING MISSING FOR ALL THAT TIME. BUT YOU CONSIDERED HER A TRAITOR, AND YOU WOULD NOT FORGIVE HER.

COLD-BLOODED ...?

I AM A SHIRO-GANE ...

AND SO ANGELINA DIED LIKE THAT, IN THAT TINY ISLAND COUNTRY.

WHAT KIND OF MOTHER ARE YOU ...?

OF COURSE NOT...

NOT A MOTHER.

DO BE QUIET ...

HOLD ON, FATIMA, IT MIGHT NOT BE SAFE IN THERE! LEAVE THIS TO ME!

IT SEEMS OUR GUESTS ARE HERE ...

OH, HERE IT IS! WE FINALLY FOUND IT! HEEEY, LUCILLE!

SIIIGH

REACH

ばっ

DO BE QUIET, MING-XIA!

つか つか つか

OKAY THEN, I'M GONNA HEAD ON IN! ONE... TWO...

MA-DAME!

D-DON'T SCARE ME LIKE THAT! JEEZ!

NOOO...! MAMAN, DON'T SCARE ME LIKE THAT!

NOOO! AHAHAHA!

NOOO...! STOP IT, MAMAN!

LOOOK OUT! ARE THERE ANY NAUGHTY CHILDREN OVER HERE STAYING UP LATE TO PLAY...?

I WAS A MOTHER WHO FAILED TO PROTECT HER CHILDREN...

IT'S TRUE...

GRRR!

THIS TENT IS FILLED, INSIDE AND OUT...

WITH ZONAPHA PATHOGENS, ISN'T IT?

WHAT IS IT, LUCILLE ?

AL-MEN-DRA.

HEY! ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?!

ORDINARY HUMANS CANNOT STAY HERE SO MUCH AS AN HOUR WITHOUT CATCHING ZONAPHA SYNDROME.

THAT GOES WITHOUT SAYING. THIS IS THE MIDNIGHT CIRCUS, AFTER ALL.

HUH ?!

HEY! COME ON, NOW!

IS THAT SO ...?

MADAME, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

アルゼナ

17

WH- WHA, WHAT ...?!

OH, REALLY NOW ...

THAT WAS A RATHER CRUDE METHOD, LUCILLE.

ARGH...! *TELL* ME I DIDN'T JUST SWALLOW BLOOD...!

GUL-P

DRINK IT.

WHO JUST *DOES* THAT OUT OF NOWHERE?! I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!

geh! bleh!

THERE ARE MANY OTHER WAYS TO WARD OFF ZONAPHA SYNDROME. WHY DID YOU *CHOOSE* THAT ONE?

TO SAVE MY REAL DAUGHTER ...

BECAUSE I COULD NOT DO ANYTHING ...

translation by funnuraba.tumblr.com

These scanlations have been uploaded *only* to Batoto so that I can remove them if the series is ever licensed. Please read them there instead of on websites that rip them and watermark them to make a profit off your views!

Thanks to Judash137 on the mangafox forums for removing the Japanese text, and to the anonymous person who tipped me off to that!

Any group with more experience or skill is welcome to take over at any time or to redo chapters I have already done if they are below the quality that this series deserves.